

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ADDIS 00318 01 OF 02 211651Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 ACDA-12

/085 W

-----102615 211713Z /41

O 211611Z JAN 78

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6993

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ADDIS ABABA 0318

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, PEPR, SOPN, AORG, OAU, ET, IR, SO, US

SUBJECT: OAU PRESS RELEASE ON IRAN AND HORN OF AFRICA

REF: ADDIS ABABA 0310

BEGIN SUMMARY: EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT OAU JAN 20 PRESS RELEASE OFFERS
US OPPORTUNITY TO REESTABLISH ITS POSITION OF EVENHANDEDNESS
VIS-VIS THE OGADEN WAR, WHICH ETHIOPIA SEES US AS HAVING DEPARTED
FROM IN RECENT PUBLIC STATEMENTS. END SUMMARY.

1. OAU HAS CHOSEN IRAN FOR BRUNT OF ITS CRITICISM IN JANUARY
20 PRESS RELEASE. NO INTELLIGENT READER COULD OVERLOOK FACT,
HOWEVER, THAT OAU WORDS ARE EQUALLY ADDRESSED TO ALL FOREIGN
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ADDIS 00318 01 OF 02 211651Z

POWERS WHICH ARE OR MIGHT BE CONTEMPLATING DIRECT INTER-
VENTION IN WAR ON EITHER SIDE. OAU MSG WAS DIRECTLY INSPIRED BY
KENYAN AMBASSADOR WHO WAS ATTEMPTING FIND FORMULA US GOVT COULD
ENDORSE. GRANTED CRITICISM OF IRAN IS STRONG, BUT IT DOES
REFLECT ATTITUDES OF MANY MODERATE AFRICAN DIPLOMATS HERE.

2. WE ARE PARTICULARLY STRUCK BY BALANCED LANGUAGE OF FINAL

PARAGRAPH. IN ITS REFERENCE TO RESOLVING AFRICAN PROBLEMS IN ACCORDANCE WITH OAU CHARTER PRINCIPLES, THERE IS NO TILT TOWARD ONE OR THE OTHER OF BELLIGERENTS, THEREBY GIVING BOTH TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND SELF-DETERMINATION EQUAL WEIGHT IN ANY FUTURE NEGOTIATION OF PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT. STATEMENT ALSO REAFFIRMS OAU'S PARAMOUNT ROLE IN SEEKING SUCH A SETTLEMENT AND WARNS ALL OUTSIDE MEDDLERS TO LEAVE AFRICAN AFFAIRS TO AFRICANS.

3. IF WE ARE INTERESTED IN PLAYING ROLE IN MEDIATING THIS WAR, AND BRINGING IT TO AN EARLY AND LASTING END, I HOPE WE CAN QUICKLY ENDORSE OAU STATEMENT IN TERMS THAT CAN BE CONVINCINGLY DEMONSTRATED TO BOTH ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA AS EVIDENCE THAT WE ARE NOT TAKING SIDES AND THAT US INFLUENCE SHOULD NOT BE DISREGARDED, IF BELLIGERENTS MOVE TOWARD NEGOTIATING TABLE IN COMING WEEKS. TO GIVE ENDORSEMENT ATTENTION IT DESERVES, IT WOULD BE PARTICULARLY HELPFUL IF IT COULD BE MADE IN FORM OF STATEMENT BY SECRETARY OR DEPUTY SECRETARY. IF WE COULD SEE OUR WAY CLEAR TO DO IT, I WOULD FURTHER RECOMMEND THAT WE COUPLE OUR ENDORSEMENT WITH SOME SORT OF PUBLIC RECOGNITION THAT ANY LASTING SETTLEMENT BASED ON TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY NECESSITATES AND PRESUPPOSES WITHDRAWAL OF SOMALI ARMED FORCES FROM OGADEN. WE HOPE SHAH COULD BE MADE TO UNDERSTAND.

4. IN FIRST MEETING WITH MOFA AMERICAN AFFAIRS DIRECTOR BERHANE DERESSA SINCE HIS RETURN FROM US, EMBOFF WAS TAKEN ABACK BY CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ADDIS 00318 01 OF 02 211651Z

DEPTH OF FEELING BERHANE SHOWED OVER US ROLE IN HORN, PARTICULARLY SINCE HE IS AS UNDERSTANDING OF US MOTIVES AS ANY OF OUR NORMAL CONTACTS. IN BERHANE'S VIEW, EPMG WAS FAST COMING TO CONVICTION, ON DUAL BASIS OF WHAT PRESIDENT SIAD IN JAN 12 PRESS CONFERENCE AND WHAT US GOVT CHOSE TO LEAVE UNSAID WITH RESPECT TO CONDEMNING SOMALI AGGRESSION AND DEMANDING WITHDRAWAL OF SOMALI TROOPS FROM OGADEN, THAT US WAS BEGINNING TO TILT MORE AND MORE IN SOMALIA'S DIRECTION. PRESIDENT'S CALL FOR SOMALIS TO INITIATE NEGOTIATIONS WAS GENERALLY INTERPRETED AS US SUPPORT FOR CEASEFIRE IN PLACE, WHICH NO ETHIOPIAN WOULD EVER AGREE TO. IN FACT, BERHANE SAID, ONLY CONDITION UNDER WHICH ETHIOPIA WOULD AGREE TO SIT DOWN WITH SOMALIS WAS PRIOR REMOVAL OF ALL SOMALI FORCES FROM OGADEN, WHETHER BY VOLUNTARY ACTION ON THEIR PART OR BY FORCE OF ETHIOPIAN ARMS. RATHER THAN CONCEDE ANYTHING IN ADVANCE IN RETURN FOR FULL WITHDRAWAL, ETHIOPIA WAS PREPARED TO FIGHT AS LONG AS IT TAKES TO ASSURE REALIZATION OF THIS OBJECTIVE. ANY WOULD-BE FOREIGN MEDIATOR, WELL-MEANING OR OTHERWISE, WHO BELIEVED DIFFERENTLY WAS HEADING DOWN BLIND ALLEY, BERHANE SAID.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ADDIS 00318 02 OF 02 211657Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 ACDA-12
/085 W

-----102630 211713Z /41

O 211611Z JAN 78

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE NIACT IMMEDIATE 6994
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ADDIS ABABA 0318

5. BERHANE SAID THAT IF US WAS NOT PREPARED TO CON-
DEMN SOMALIA AND CALL FOR HER WITHDRAWAL, US WOULD BE
WELL ADVISED TO CEASE MAKING PUBLIC STATEMENTS ABOUT HORN
ALTOGETHER, SINCE WHAT IT SAID SERVED ONLY TO ALIENATE
ETHIOPIA, ENCOURAGE IRAN AND OTHERS TO MAKE UNACCEPTABLE
THREATS, AND PROLONG RATHER THAN SHORTEN CONFLICT. BERHANE
HAD NO ANSWER TO EMBOFF QUESTION WHY ETHIOPIA DEMANDED THAT
US MAKE STATEMENTS CONDEMNATORY OF SOMALIA THAT GO FAR
BEYOND ANYTHING OAU HAS SO FAR BEEN PREPARED TO STATE PUBLICLY.
BERHANE INDICATED THAT MEETING IN WASHINGTON OF REPRESENT-
ATIVES OF SAME FIVE POWERS TO WHICH SIAD BARRE HAD ONLY FEW
DAYS PREVIOUSLY APPEALED FOR MILITARY ASSISTANCE WAS FURTHER
OMINOUS DEVELOPMENT IN ETHIOPIAN EYES. HE WAS NOT IN MOOD
TO LISTEN TO COUNTERVAILING ARGUMENTS AND WAS NOT PREPARED
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ADDIS 00318 02 OF 02 211657Z

TO SAY WHEN FONMIN FELLEKE WOULD RECEIVE ME TO HEAR FULL

EXPOSITION OF US POSITION.

6. PART OF BERHANE'S ANGER NO DOUBT REFLECTED GENERAL ETHIOPIAN TOUCHINESS ABOUT ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH USSR AND CUBA, AND ETHIOPIAN PERCEPTION THAT US CRITICISM OF SOVIET-CUBAN ROLE HERE REFLECTS GROWING US TENDENCY TO VIEW SITUATION IN HORN IN EAST-WEST CONFRONTATIONAL TERMS. WHATEVER THE REASON, ETHIOPIAN DOUBTS ABOUT US GOOD INTENTIONS, AT LEAST AMONG THOSE WHO COUNT IN EPMG, HAVE PROBABLY NEVER BEEN MORE PRONOUNCED AND, AS BERHANE INDICATED, NEITHER FONMIN FELLEKE NOR ANYONE ELSE IN AUTHORITY SEEMS TO BE IN ANY MOOD TO LISTEN TO OUR WORDS UNTIL WE HAVE DEMONSTRATED TO THEM IN SOME PUBLIC FASHION OUR RECOGNITION THAT IT WAS ETHIOPIA WHICH WAS INVADED IN THIS WAR, AND THAT ANY SETTLEMENT OF WAR PRESUPPOSES WITHDRAWAL OF ATTACKERS.

7. FOR THIS REASON, IT IS NOT AT ALL CERTAIN THAT EPMG WILL BE VERY SATISFIED WITH OAU PRESS RELEASE EITHER. EXCEPT FOR ITS SHARP CRITICISM OF IRAN, STATEMENT IS ONE FROM WHICH SOMALIA CAN DERIVE AT LEAST AS MUCH COMFORT AS ETHIOPIA. STILL, ETHIOPIA KEEPS ACCUSING US OF TRYING TO END RUN OAU, AND SINCE SENTIMENTS OF LAST PARAGRAPH OF OAU RELEASE ARE ONES THAT WE UNQUALIFIEDLY SHARE ANYWAY, WE HOPE OUR RESPONSE CAN BE PROMPT AND AUTHORITATIVE WITH NO DOUBT ABOUT OUR SUPPORT FOR OAU.

MATHERON

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS RELEASES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ADDIS00318
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780033-0095
Format: TEL
From: ADDIS ABABA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780137/aaaabfgs.tel
Line Count: 196
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 650f25e1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 ADDIS ABABA 310
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3735583
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: OAU PRESS RELEASE ON IRAN AND HORN OF AFRICA
TAGS: PBOR, PEPR, SOPN, AORG, ET, IR, SO, US, OAU
To: STATE TEHRAN
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/650f25e1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014